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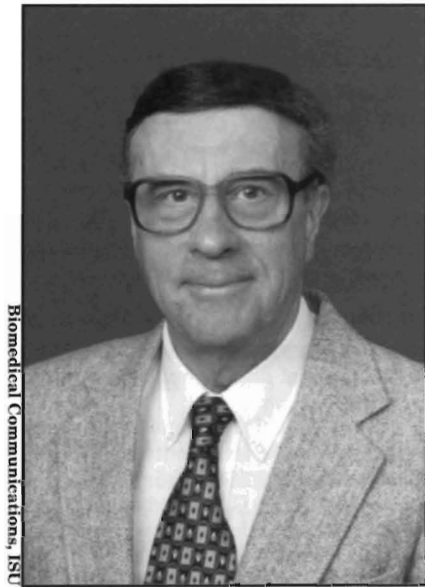
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Dr. Beran Retires From ISU After 25 Years

Lisa De Nault[†]



Dr. Beran retired in June 1998.

After 25 years of invaluable teaching, Dr. George W. Beran, Distinguished Professor of Veterinary Preventive Medicine, Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Preventive Medicine, retired from Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine Faculty in June of this year.

Dr. Beran earned a DVM from Iowa State University, a Ph.D. in Medical Microbiology with minors in Biostatistics and Ecology from University of Kansas, a Doctor of Humane Letters (Honoris Causa) from Silliman University, is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine with a Specialty in Epidemiology, and a Diplomate of the American College of Epidemiology. His list of accreditation, responsibilities in food safety, professional consultancies, lectureships, committees, boards, honors, awards, scientific publications, conference presentations and professional visits are exhaustive. His accomplishments are outstanding, especially the fact that he has

authored or co-authored over 50 journal articles just since 1992. The sheer volume of his academic work is very impressive, but I wanted to touch on Dr. Beran's highlights at ISU in his own words.

Prior to coming to ISU, Dr. Beran had three main areas of work in his career. He worked for two years in the U.S. Public Health Service as an Epidemic Intelligence Officer, then he and his family were assigned to the Philippines through the Presbyterian Church where he worked at Silliman University for 13 years as a professor of microbiology and as the Director of the Negros Oriental Provincial Laboratory. He then returned to Iowa which is his home state and Iowa State University which his Alma Mater. As Dr. Beran remarks, "I was fortunate enough to return from overseas, be hired at Iowa State, and return to Iowa".

Since 1973, Dr. Beran has been a professor of Veterinary Preventive Medicine as well as had many international experiences as a visiting professor in Nigeria and India. But when asked what he feels are his major highlights or accomplishments at ISU, he states, "First of all, I have obviously enjoyed teaching and I think that has been a major, major, major area of highlight. I have taught a large number of courses to professional students, graduate students, and undergraduate courses on the university campus. That has been a major part." Dr. Beran considers the development of the eradication program for pseudorabies in swine as his second biggest highlight at ISU. He served on the development committee and was a member of the team that initiated the pilot project to study the feasibility of the eradication project. This pilot project, conducted in Marshall County, IA, was highly successful and served as the model for improvement and eradication of pseudorabies for Iowa. For the past eight years, food safety has been his main area of research focus. He has coordinated the Iowa State

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part of the Food Safety Consortium, made up of Iowa State University, Kansas State University, and the University of Arkansas.

When asked what some of his favorite moments were at ISU, Dr. Beran had to think a minute. To the interviewer's surprise, he stated that the greatest moment was after being here for only two short years, when Dr. Beran received the Norden Teaching Award for Distinguished Teaching in the field of Veterinary Medicine. He said "that was quite a wonderful surprise. And then, the students did it again twelve years later. Those were great, great surprises." But, what surprised me, as I sat in Dr. Beran's office and looked around at all the awards, honorable degrees, and worldly achievements, was that an award given by students would bring a tear to his eyes. This heartfelt response epitomizes Dr. Beran, for he is a professor who truly cares and utterly enjoys teaching.

Along with enthusiasm for teaching, Dr. Beran enjoyed and helped facilitate the increased movement of veterinarians into the public health area. He has contributed to advanced awareness and recognition of the roles veterinarians play in the intimate association of animal and human health. He has also helped with continued disease eradication programs from food sources to protect people and enhance safety of food from animal origin. Dr. Beran's emphasis in public health has not been limited to just food safety. He has sought to communicate to students how public health is important to the practice of veterinary medicine, whether food animal or small animal practice. He has also tied in the concept of the human-animal bond. For many years, Dr. Beran led students and their pets in visits to care facilities. He feels that it is important for students to understand the positive effects that pet therapy has on residents of care facilities.

So, now that Dr. Beran has been retired for four months, what is he doing

with his free time? From hearing his schedule, one would never guess that he is retired. He is on several national and international committees which are too numerous to mention, and said "those don't stop when you retire and I like to stay up to date." Dr. Beran also has major research grants and one specifically addresses food-borne pathogens in swine. He is also receiving an increasing number of requests for international consulting. He continues to make trips abroad, and after this interview he was jetting off to the Caribbean for consulting work. With the enthusiasm of a twenty year old, Dr. Beran is still keeping busy.

I asked what Dr. Beran foresaw in the future with regards to veterinarians, food safety, and public health. With his 25 years of experience Dr. Beran replied, "I see that the food animal practicing veterinarians are going to become much more involved in working as partners with the animal producers and that the animals will be free of food-borne microorganisms and residues. I think this will be the major contribution." Through the years, practicing veterinarians have participated in disease eradication programs and Dr. Beran believes there will be much more involvement by practicing veterinarians in such programs. Also, Dr. Beran sees "an increasing role of veterinarians in companion animal practices to work with the owners to insure diseases aren't transmitted to other people." Dr. Beran emphasizes that improving public health will be a team effort involving both companion animal and food animal veterinarians.

Dr. Beran reflects back upon Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine. "I have been very happy to be a part of Iowa State. It's a good place to be. I think that none of you will find at any point in your career that you'll be sorry that you had chosen Iowa State. And you never need to be embarrassed to say 'this is my Alma Mater.' No, it is a good place to be, a really good place to be."♦